The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

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Family Music.

Beside the window I sit alone,
And I watch as the stars come out,
I catch the sweetness of Lucy's tone,
And the mirth of the chorus' shout:
I listen and look on the solemn night,
Whilst they stand singing beneath the light.

Lucy looks just like an early rose
(Somebody else is thinking so),
And every day more fair she grows
(Somebody will not say me no),
And she sings like a bird whose heart is bless'd
(And Somebody thinks of building a nest!)

And now she chooses another tune,
One that was often sung by me:—
I do not think that these nights in June
Are half so fine as they used to be,
Or 'tis colder watching the solemn night,
Than standing singing beneath the light.

Lucy, you sing like a silver bell,
Your face is fresh as a morning flower—
Why should you think of the sobs which swell
When leaves fall fast in the autumn bower?
Rather gather your buds and sing your song,
Their perfume and echo will linger long.

I am grey and grave,—and 'tis quite time too,—
I go at leisure along my ways;
But I know how life appears to you,
I know the words that Somebody says:
As old songs are sweet, and old words true,
So there's one old story that's always new!

There is a grave that you do not know,
A drawer in my desk that you've never seen,
A page in my life that I never show,
A love in my heart that is always green;
Sing out the old song! I fear not the pain,
I sang it once—Lucy, sing it again!

ISABELLA FYVIE.

A Man who did his best to Help the People—Thomas Henry Huxley.

BY REV. CHARLES HARGROVE, M.A.

"Posthumous fame is not particularly attractive to me, but if I am to be remembered at all, I would rather it should be as 'a man who did his best to help the people.'"—Letter of Professor HUXLEY to Mr. GEORGE HOWELL, M.P., 1880.

"*Let us now praise famous men . . . who have led the people by their counsel, and by their understanding of letters have been the people's friends, wise and eloquent in their teaching.*"—ECCLESIASTICUS xliv. 4.

For it is good to praise—not for their sakes who have passed away out of the twilight of human judgments into the all-discerning light of that day, in which their achievements and their shortcomings show clear, nor our poor criticisms can more elate or depress them—but for our own, that we may be made humble by contrast of their greatness with our littleness, that we may learn gratitude for the benefits we enjoy through their labours and patience, that we may be inspired by the recollection of their virtues to correct and improve our own lives.

And truly there have abounded famous men in the England of Victoria's reign, men whose names will be illustrious as long as the story of English literature and religion and science is read and appreciated by the world. Tennyson and Browning, Carlyle and Ruskin, Darwin and Tyndall, Freeman and Froude, Stanley and Colenso—to mention only the most recent and the most distinguished—these all are names which will not be forgotten by posterity, nor

their works soon be laid aside upon topmost shelves. It is not learning which will save them from oblivion, for our old libraries are crowded with tomes full of learning on which the dust lies undisturbed from year to year, it is that "by their understanding they have been the people's friends," that their teaching has been not merely correct or salutary but "wise also and eloquent."

And now another name must be added to the roll of the great writers who have made this our time so remarkable as an age of enquiry and research and progress. And to none of them all, I think, could the words of my text be more truthfully applied.

He is best known as one of the chief in that group of English students who have contributed so largely to the advancement of science during this last half century, an advance unparalleled in any previous five centuries of the history of mankind. "He was the first zoologist among his countrymen," wrote Hœckel, the great German naturalist, "and in each of the larger divisions of the animal kingdom we are indebted to him for important discoveries. He was one of the few investigators who had thoroughly mastered the whole range of biology." "His knowledge," writes another "Student of Science," "covered a wide field: he wrote on many subjects, and touched nothing without leaving marks of independent enquiry and original thought." If this were all, if he were celebrated only as a great naturalist, who, comparing the living animal with the scanty remains of predecessors dead a million years, sought to discover the deep secret of nature's proceedings—still ought we to praise his work and praise God for him. If there be any truth at all in that Hebrew story which ascribes it to God's gift that Solomon had knowledge "of trees, from the cedar tree in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall, as well also as of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes,"—if this elementary science were from God, and God to be thanked for it, shall we not much more attribute knowledge so far in excess of all Solomon could conceive possible, not less but rather much more to God?

And if, moreover, it be true, as the Hebrew psalmist says, that "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth *His* handiwork," and that "all the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord," then must it follow that those who search earth and heaven, and who discover and reveal to us their story and their wonders, are, if we will so receive them, prophets of the Most High and inspirers of our devotion, even if themselves unconscious of inspiration or untouched by devout feeling.

Nevertheless, it is characteristic of knowledge that it "puffeth up," and too often do we find the most eminent intellectual attainments associated with none of the moral qualities and wider sympathies which can alone win our unreserved admiration and appeal to our love. It is in such cases the knowledge, not the man, we praise; work can have no claim upon our gratitude when the motive of it has been only the doer's own satisfaction; we value the gift none the less, but there is no reason to extol the generosity of the giver.

It is not, therefore, of Professor Huxley as a great scientist, the author of luminous papers on "Oceanic Hydrozoa" or "The Theory of the Vertebrate Skull," distinguished for his work in anthropology, biology, comparative anatomy, that we have to speak here. All that he did in this way he might have done, and been withal a cold, proud, selfish man, in no wise to be looked up to as deserving of imitation. It was because he was so entirely the contrary, because with high scientific attainments he united deep religious feeling and strong popular sympathies that it has seemed to me that the pulpit, of which he was no admirer, is concerned in holding him up to admiration.

He was a deeply religious man; I have no hesitation in saying so, though, as we all know, he was deliberately and for conscience sake a doubter. "Unless I shall see I will not believe" were the words of his favourite apostle, after whom he rejoiced to be himself called, Thomas; and these words he made his own, not in the narrow sense, which would reduce a man's faith to within the limits of his horizon, or, at most, to the narrow dimensions of his individual brain, but in the large and only defensible meaning—that an intelligent being should know *why* he believes.

Brought up, as he tells us himself, to believe that "on pain of reprobation in this world and damnation in the next, he must accept in the strict and literal sense every statement

contained in the Bible," he found himself checked in every investigation he essayed by the "thorny barrier with its warning notice—No thoroughfare." Genesis barred in those days the way of scientific research, and if any dared to disregard its injunction they were subject to outlaw not only by the Church, but by Society too.

But his was not the angry rebellion of many who have turned to hate the Bible because of the tyrannous pretentions made on its behalf,—pretensions which have no support from its own pages. His attitude was not that of hypocritical submission or unreasoning scorn, but of reverent regard for a Book which holds the first place in the literature of the world, and which, far more than any other, has inspired the hearts and moulded the minds of men. And as such he was a consistent advocate, when on the London School Board, for keeping for the Bible its place as one of the best instruments of popular education, and to the last he lamented the general decay of the habit of Bible reading in the present generation.

"Doubt," he said, "is not, as priests have taught, a grievous sin; it is a duty. The golden rule is—Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct they cannot be doubted." But the doubt to which he persuaded men was, to be reverent and earnest, "the active scepticism whose whole aim is to conquer itself and not that sort which is born of flippancy and ignorance, and whose aim is only to perpetuate itself, as an excuse for idleness and indifference." There is a scepticism which is more contemptible than superstition, and is often as unreasonable and violent. It was not such that he ever advocated. He was from youth upwards a doubter, but only that by doubt he might distinguish between the accepted falsehood and the neglected truth, and rid himself of the one and come into possession of the other.

He was an Agnostic, too, and the first who took for his own a name which has since been found convenient by many who are too idle to think, or too worldly to call themselves Dissenters. But I think his Agnosticism was much nearer to true religion than is the dogmatic omniscience of many a pious professor and reverent teacher.

"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." "If," he wrote, "any so-called religion takes away from this great saying of Micah's, it commits a wanton mutilation of itself: if it adds thereto it obscures, I think, the perfect ideal of religion."

Yes, doubter of much which men generally believe, and denier of the possibility of knowing much which they confidently assert, he was yet, I venture to say, a religious man; but his religion was worship without form, faith without creed: an awe of the Infinite, "in all, and through all, and over all," which was no mere sentiment to be indulged in a poetic mood, but a conviction of the solemnity of life, which found its outcome in earnest work. "Why trouble ourselves," he writes, "about matters of which, however important they may be, we do know nothing, and can know nothing?" I would venture to reply that the very desire to know, is a presumption at least that we can get to know something, for nature does not plant in us desires impossible of satisfaction, but I heartily and gratefully endorse the sentence which follows, and could wish all churches and all outsiders agreed to it in faith and practice. "We live in a world which is full of misery and ignorance, and the plain duty of each and all of us, is to try to make the little corner he can influence somewhat less miserable and somewhat less ignorant than it was before he entered it. Whatever be true, whatever false, whatever known or unknown, is not this certain and beyond dispute? Why is it our duty? And what will befall us if we do it, or if we leave it undone? About these things we differ, but that it is a duty incumbent on all, and that blessed is he who performs, and that it is somehow worse for him who neglects it, we none really doubt.

And yet it is Huxley himself who warns us that "the errors of materialism may paralyze the energies and destroy the beauty of a life." Yes, and it is, therefore, that we cannot be indifferent to these questions though so high above us, lest we lose faith at once in God and in man—in a life of the world to come, and in the obligations of justice and mercy and duty in this life here.

And so it was that he had no alliance or sympathy with those who would prove the sincerity of their abandonment of their childish

faith by their openly-expressed contempt of it and its adherents. They may call themselves by the respectable name of Agnostics, but their true standing is with Atheists, their unbelief is as dogmatic as is the belief they have abandoned; professing to know nothing, their real assumption is that they do know everything which can be known. Not so he, ever penetrated as he was with "the consciousness of the limitation of man, with the sense of an open secret, in which lies the essence of religion." Nor could he credit it that anyone, who had had experience of "the deep joys and deeper anxieties" which love and birth and death bring to us, "who had stood alone with his dead before the abyss of the Eternal, could rest content with negative criticism, with mere denial of a God or a future life." "Looking at the matter," he writes, "from the most rigidly scientific point of view, the assumption that amidst the myriads of worlds scattered through endless space there can be no intelligence as much greater than man's as his is greater than a blackbeetle's; no being endowed with powers of influencing the course of nature as much greater than his as his is greater than a snail's, seems to me not merely baseless, but impertinent." It was this impertinence of unbelief which he consistently denounced as even more objectionable than that arrogance of orthodoxy which to the last he set his face against.

Moreover, the doubt he cherished did not lead him into selfish isolation, nor the vagueness of his religion become a mere sentimentality. If he had given himself up unreservedly to the pursuit of knowledge, he would assuredly have been yet more eminent as a scientific discoverer, and might have reached to a name which would be for ever illustrious—if he had tried to turn his talents and acquirements to the best pecuniary account he might have made a fortune such as would have rendered the small pension on which he retired at the age of sixty a trifling addition to his income, instead of a real necessity to maintaining the modest life he had been used to—but he was much more a man than a scientist, and his heart beat in unison with humanity, for the young, the poor, the ignorant, for all whom he could help.

Learning, art, refinement, taste, skill, and all such like raise us above other men and women, the vulgar multitude who are unlearned and unrefined; and it is the inevitable consequence that we are tempted to separate ourselves, and regard with indifference, if not contempt, those who are as much inferior to us in attainments as they are superior in numbers. It is the reproach made to Oxford by one of her noblest sons that she has always been wanting in popular sympathies, which is but to say that Oxford, like Leeds or Manchester, is very human, and succumbs to the temptations which beset the learned, just as do the poor or the rich succumb to those which are peculiar to their state of life.

But here is a man learned, eloquent, renowned, a President of the Royal Society, a member of H.M. Privy Council, whose sympathy with the common people never failed, but rather deepened with his years. "There are two things," he wrote, "I really care about—one is the progress of scientific thought, and the other is the bettering of the condition of the masses of the people by bettering them in the way of lifting themselves out of the misery which has hitherto been the lot of the majority of them. Posthumous fame is not particularly attractive to me, but, if I am to be remembered at all, I would rather it should be as 'a man who did his best to help the people' than by any other title." It is as such, above all, that I would commend him, and to those especially who seek for knowledge. "Learn what is true in order to do what is right" is, he elsewhere says, "the whole duty of man," and it is a noble conception of the true value of learning, and one which exalts above every other kind that which is most necessary to help us to right doing.

And what is all right doing but doing unto others as we would be done by. We seek for ourselves wisdom and understanding that we may attain to higher rank in the scale of creation, be of more worth in the world. Let us then make it our business, as it is our duty, to give freely, even as we have received, of the stores which generations have accumulated for our service. What we keep for ourselves is lost, only what we impart is saved.

"Politicians tell you," he said, now 30 years ago, "that you must educate the masses because they are going to be masters. The clergy join in the cry, for they affirm that the people are drifting from church and chapel into broadest infidelity. The manufacturers declare that ignorance makes

bad workmen." They were all right, politics, trade, religion, all demand knowledge, and it is only tyranny and superstition which can flourish in the night of ignorance. "But," added Huxley, and it is characteristic of him, "a few voices are lifted up in favour of the doctrine that the masses should be educated because they are men and women with unlimited capacities of being, doing, and suffering, and that it is as true now as ever it was that the people perish for lack of knowledge."

"I have compassion on the multitudes," said Jesus, and his words were written deep in the heart of the nineteenth century Agnostic. This, and not faith or unfaith, is the distinguishing characteristic of the true disciple.

They are not lovely, the toiling millions, they have no 'form of comeliness' that we should turn from the serenity of scientific and literary society to devote ourselves to their service; but they are our own flesh and blood, and the Christ in every age, the ideal of manhood in the fulness of its divine capacities, ever appeals to us, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethern ye have done unto Me." For the service of man is the only service we can render to God; and if not they who say "Lord, Lord," but who do the Father's will shall enter into His kingdom, then surely has he we knew on earth as the Agnostic his place in the true Church, and his part with the immortals in heaven.

He has the largest life who lives nobly in the lives of the largest number of people.

The fairest life ever lived on earth was that of a poor man; and with all its beauty it moved within the limits of narrow resources.

If you want to spoil all that God gives you; if you want to be miserable yourelf, and a maker of misery to others, the way is easy enough. Only be selfish and it is done at once.

The best part of one's life is the performance of his daily duties. All higher motives, ideals, conceptions, sentiments, in a man are of no account if they do not come down and strengthen him for the better discharge of the duties which devolve upon him in the ordinary affairs of life.

Unity of Worship amid Diversities of Theology.

The unmistakable signs of reviving bigotry among the dogmatists suggest that a great opportunity is coming for the proclamation of the unfettered gospel. The situation plainly demands new facilities for preaching, new concentration of energy, new ardour in the ministry of the word.

There is the prior need, which includes these, and it may be stated in the proposition—*that Unitarians should draw closer together.* It is of the highest consequence to the interests of truth at the present time that the various churches, which the world calls Unitarian, should make a clear, united, intelligible impression on the religious life of our age. This they can hardly do in the state of isolation in which so many of these churches find themselves. But for that isolation their gospel would win a far wider acceptance. The stand they make would be many times more effective than it is, if by any means they could learn to stand together.

Dr. Martineau's scheme of 1888 is dead, but the need Dr. Martineau tried to answer is not dead, and will not be until we have either satisfied it or perished in consequence of not having done so.

But here the ground needs clearing of possible misconceptions. In the first place, no organization can be healthy or successful, the chief reason for which is to make the stronger churches support the weaker. Such support of the weak by the strong is beyond question a high duty, but it does not constitute a sufficient basis for organization. So long as that is what we intend by the word we shall never be really organised.

Secondly—Though it would be eminently desirable to embrace in any scheme of organization *all* the congregations represented at the Triennial Conference, yet it may be impossible to do this. But if any sensible proportion of those congregations could draw together something of great value would have been gained, in spite of the fact that the majority preferred to be as they are. The first step is to separate the elements that can and will unite and are conscious of affinities, from those who cannot or will not unite or are not conscious of any affinity

in particular. The above does not amount to a proposal that some should make a secession, because in the present state of the Free Churches there is nothing to secede from.

Thirdly.—The grounds of our unity must be sought far back. We shall be united only in so far as we feel a *common sentiment of worship.* All proposals for drawing us closer together by schemes of literary or propagandist enterprise are premature, because their success depends on a prior consciousness of unity, which at present we lack. We cannot have a thoroughly representative literature, either journalistic or otherwise, until there is something more definite to represent. The editor of a denominational journal who cannot speak for the common consciousness of the Church is in a weak position, and that is how the case stands with us. Nor can there be any successful propaganda carried on by a body of men, each of whom is always obliged to emphasize the fact that he is speaking for himself alone. When a prophet speaks, his words are not "from himself"—(John xiv. 10).

Fifthly.—A full-grown unity cannot be produced by any mechanical scheme. Some small affinity will be discovered, and from that unity will grow as from a seed. It will be an enormous gain when the first modest step has been taken. Then, but not till then, we may confidently expect great results.

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Unity of theological teaching, such as a creed might impose, is, of course, not to be thought of. But cannot the Church—by which I mean the totality of our congregations, or the totality of some group of them—*learn to worship in common.* If we ourselves could realize, and make the world realize, that we all worshipped the same God, and in the same spirit, would this not be a great gain to us as worshippers and to the world as possible companions in our worship?

Can any basis for such common worship be found?

Amid all our differences we have one agreement of which the immense import has been commonly overlooked. *We are agreed as to the possibility and the necessity of giving a religious interpretation to the life that now is and the world that now is.* We may differ endlessly and must be allowed to differ as to the form of the interpretation, but as to the objects to be interpreted we stand in essential agreement.

We are agreed as to the possibility and necessity of giving a religious interpretation, in general, to the world of physical nature, and to every aspect of the life of man; in particular, to personal life, domestic life, civic life; to all forms of serviceable labour, to art, science, literature, politics; to the mission of great men; to conscience, love, sorrow, pain, joy; to birth, growth, and death. In all these things we recognise a Divine Presence and hear a Divine Command.

In this there is a basis of unity, of which use ought to be made. Further, we are all agreed in being Nonconformists.

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The suggestion is now offered that out of the fifty-two Sundays of the year a certain number should be set apart, and that one or more should be allotted in a fixed order to the most essential of the ideas named above, the intention being that in all the consenting churches worship should be conducted on the fixed Sunday, with avowed reference to the idea the day was set apart to mark and celebrate. Preaching would naturally tend to follow the same lines, though this, of course, would be left entirely to the discretion of the minister. A common liturgy would *not* be necessary, though it would be compatible with the scheme. But in all the consenting churches *one prayer* should be offered up in common and *one hymn or psalm* sung in common. A book of such prayers would have to be compiled by the competent, and adopted in the consenting Churches.

The following is an experimental sketch plan of the distribution of Sundays. It will be seen that it embodies what is of permanent value in the existing Christian year, giving full recognition to the great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. Indeed it is an attempt to supply, in accordance with the spirit of free and rational piety, a new Christian Year.

(It should be emphasised that the scheme as it stands is tentative only).

A NEW CHRISTIAN YEAR.

January.—"Life as a Trust from a Higher Power;" Two Sundays.
February.—"The Consecration of Human Labour: The Labour of the Body and the Mind;" Two Sundays.
March.—"Good and Evil: The Conflict and the Victory;" Two Sundays.
April (*Easter*).—"Dying to Live: Death, Re-birth, New Life;" Three Sundays.
May and June (*Whitsuntide*).—"The Manifestation of the Divine: The Divine Power, the Divine Light, the Divine Order, the Divine Love;" Four Sundays.
July, August, September.—Open.
October.—"Nonconformity and Religious Freedom;" One Sunday. "Other Religions;" One Sunday. "All Prophets;" One Sunday. "All Saints" (November 1st); One Sunday.
November.—"Civic Duty and the Kingdom of God;" Two Sundays.
December (*Christmas*).—"Domestic Life: The Divine Childhood; the Divine Motherhood; the Divine Meaning of Death and Commemoration of the Dead;" Two Sundays.
Total: 21 fixed Sundays; 31 unfixed.

It may be said in recommendation of a scheme on these lines:—

1. It involves no infraction of the theological freedom of the individual.

2. It would provide the world with an impressive and sufficient answer to the question always being asked, "Where do the Free Churches find their God?" *and it would do this in a positive form.*

3. It would add to the impressiveness and solemnity of worship.

4. It would supply a basis for the theological instruction of the young.

5. It would create, in a natural and edifying manner, the beginning of the consciousness of common Church life, for the want of which the Free Churches are nigh to perish.

Free minds are difficult to weld into any sort of unity, but their joint strength when welded is greater than that of minds not free. The difficulty of combining them cannot be insuperable. If it is possible to unite 100 free minds into the unity of one congregation, it must also be possible to unite 100 free congregations into the unity of *one Church.*

L. P. JACKS.

The repression of all manifestion of religious feeling is one of the curses that attend a false refinement and an artificial reserve.

On the Simplification of Life.

Abstract of a Lecture delivered to the Croydon Ethical and Religious Fellowship by
HERBERT RIX.

The subject implies a postulate which, though many of those whom I now address accept it, an average audience will scarcely grant—the postulate that the life we are living is unsatisfactory, and needs simplifying. In support of this view of the unsatisfactoriness of life as we live it we may, however, quote several of the prophets of our time. Wordsworth, not yet half-a-century dead, sang:—

> "O friend! I know not which way I must look
> For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
> To think that now our life is only drest
> For show; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
> Or groom!"

Carlyle complains that "we have sumptuous garnitures for our life, but have forgotten to *live* in the middle of them." Ruskin mourns over air made pestilent "to supply London and other such towns with their iron railings, vulgar upholstery, jewels, toys, liveries, lace, and other means of dissipation and dishonour of life." Thoreau, Emerson, Tolstoi, and Edward Carpenter all write in the same strain.

Such, then, is the disease. What is the cure? The cure, like the disease, is complex. The disease is partly social, partly personal; and so must be the cure. This morning we deal only with the personal question: Can the *individual* do anything to counteract the deadening influence upon himself of a sated and luxurious society? That is the question before us.

It would be difficult to say by whom the doctrine of simple living was first taught. Wherever a complex civilisation has arisen, there has probably been some protest against the dangers of luxury. Plato, in the second book of the "Republic," represents Socrates as describing the mode of life in the ideal state. His citizens were to have clothes and shoes and houses, and to feed on barley and wheat "made into noble puddings and loaves," which, to save the kitchen-work, should be served up on a mat of reeds or clean leaves. For a relish he concedes salt and olives and cheese and onions, and for dessert, figs and pulse and beans. We know also that the historical Socrates did actually live a life of

extreme simplicity. "He had a maxim that to want nothing belonged only to the gods, and to want as little as possible was the nearest approach to the godlike that man might reach."

Jesus of Nazareth also taught his disciples that they were not to fret about what they should eat or what they should drink, or how they should dress, he reproved the woman of Bethany who was "cumbered about much serving," and he emphatically declared the great disadvantage of being too rich, because it made it almost impossible for a man to pass through the narrow gate of a spiritual life. For ages these sayings of Jesus took no great or general hold except when adopted from motives of self-mortification. But now, in these last days, there has begun a revival of this Nazarene doctrine. Wordsworth heads the movement, Thoreau, Tolstoi, Carpenter and others follow in his wake, and carry the doctrine to its logical extreme.

But what, more precisely, do we mean by simplicity? We mean two things:

1. The renunciation of superfluities.
2. The renunciation of artificialities.

1. The advocates of simplicity often speak as though their main idea was to abandon all the conveniences of life. The reasonable man will abandon only the inconveniences of life. We must remember, however, that inconveniences are of two kinds, those that come from too little and those that come from too much. We do not always realise the extent to which we are oppressed by the latter—the superfluities of life. There is scarcely one of us who does not through them separate himself more or less from reality—who does not do things that he does not want to do, pretend to enjoy things that he does not enjoy, and allow himself to be drawn more or less into the toilsome stream of fashion. The extremists perhaps carry their doctrine too far. They say, keep your leisure by sacrificing household goods and the whole household system. But though this is the obvious solution, I am not sure that it is the right one. It may be worth our while to sacrifice a certain measure of liberty for the attainment of a certain measure of comfort. The difficult question is, What measure? The answer to that difficult question depends upon who the comfort is for. Is it for comfort's sake or for *life's* sake? It also depends upon what the individual in question is, and what are the needs of his particular nature, so that the definition of a reasonable simplicity is reduced to this: "That degree of plainness in living which for the individual in question contributes to liberty, repose, or any other spiritual good."

A life to be rich must be social; also, it must have varied experience and a large outlook. And these suggest certain limitations to the extreme doctrine of simplification. The truth remains, however, that nine-tenths of us burden ourselves and others with a mountain of labour, the outcome of which is a heap of superfluities which do not increase our happiness or comfort, but which decrease our liberty and leisure.

We may perhaps illustrate the principle of simplicity by a reference to art. Simplicity in art consists in omitting the irrelevant. No beginner in art is ever simple. The beginner puts in all he sees, and it is only by degrees that he gets to see the essential and by degrees gains courage to omit the non-essential. As in art, so in life. Living is in fact one of the fine arts; and the lives of the majority—their homes, their domestic arrangements, their pursuits—are lacking in the grace of simplicity. They are not like the picture of the great artist, simple in all their variety; they are like the production of the tyro, crammed with teasing detail.

In answer to all this, there are two main objections which one continually hears.

First. There is the stock objection that it is *asceticism*, a word which is supposed of itself to be a sufficient condemnation of anything to which it is applied. As if anything worth accomplishing had ever been accomplished *without* asceticism! As if *askeesis*, self-restraint, the athletics of the soul, were not the very backbone of every worthy and redeeming movement! That moderation, that self-discipline, that wise economy of force which is often foolishly confounded with fanatic gloom, is in fact the very salt of human character and the very soul of social reform.

Secondly. There is the objection so often urged that simple living would destroy art. In a simpler state of society the frippery-monger would probably disappear, bric-a-brac might vanish from our midst, beauty, on the whole, would be less divorced from utility, the general tendency would be rather to make the useful beautiful than to crowd the home with beautiful

inutilities; but art itself would be the very last thing to suffer in our New Republic.

2. The second branch of our subject, "simplicity as the renunciation of artificialities,' time does not permit us to speak of at length. The principle is the same. Sincerity is itself a kind of simplicity, and sincerity lies at the root of that simplicity of manners which renders the elaboration of ceremony and etiquette unnecessary and even hateful.

Our whole subject may be summed up in a single word—*be natural.* Keep near to nature, for the heart of nature, beneath all her variety, is always simple and sincere. Alas! how far we are from nature now! How far from her in every sense! How far from her wild freedom, her serene repose, her homely sincerity! How the monotony of our deadly comfort has dried up the fountain of the heart!

"The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers,
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything we are out of tune;
It moves us not—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed out-worn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn."

Occasional Notes.

THE REV. STOPFORD BROOKE.—The appointment of Mr. Brooke as Preacher to Manchester College, of which the news has recently been made public, is an event of great importance to Oxford, to the College, to the Free Churches, and to the world at large. As an art critic, an historian of literature and a man of letters, Mr. Brooke's fame is world-wide. As a poet he has produced some of the most beautiful verse of recent years. But it is as a preacher of the religion of love that we have deepest cause to welcome him to his new sphere. Fifteen years ago, finding himself no longer in sympathy with the Established Church, he had the courage to secede, thereby setting an example of consistency and veracity which has since been followed by many of the clergy. During the whole of his ministry, both inside and outside the Establishment, he has exercised a powerful influence as a preacher who approached the problems of the religious life mainly from the imaginative and emotional side. Without pretending to be a philosopher, Mr. Brooke's keen intuitions have led him to a theological position essentially the same as that of Martineau, and for many years he has pleaded with a voice of rare passion and eloquence for the great truths of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. His great congregation at Bedford Chapel was composed of varied elements, from lords to shopkeepers, and in course of the year included multitudes of strangers from all parts of the world. On all those who were in the habit of hearing him he has left a series of indelible impressions. The strong figure of the preacher, the piercing voice, the noble face aglow with the light of moral passion, are among the great memories of many a heart. It is impossible to overrate the value of Mr. Brooke's influence in the place where our future ministers are to be obtained. He will cause the students of the College to feel the worth and dignity of their future calling. He will soften the hard, critical tendency to which all academic circles are prone. He will bring the torch of enthusiasm into a university of which it has been said that there utter indifferentism is the only good form. He will raise the status of the College in the University and before the world, and will arouse many to take interest in its life who would otherwise have been indifferent. Above all Mr. Brooke is a whole man, a vivid and impressive personality, a centre of living force. Whatever sphere such a man enters becomes better for his presence. We wish him health, long life, and joy in his new work.

Our own private weather almanac says of October "Look out for squalls and Church Congresses." Certainly we have had the Congresses, and the Episcopalian gathering at Norwich began with a very lively squall between the Evangelicals and the Ritualistic party on the subject of reunion with Rome. An Irish row in Parliament was mild and flavourless compared with the meeting over which Viscount Halifax presided. To one party Rome is the "Scarlet what-do-you-call-her of Babylon" (see Charles Lamb)—to the other she is the "Holy Mother Church," the

sole authority on faith and works. Now it is quite clear that when these two views meet there will be "wigs on the green."

Reunion was the dominant note at all these Congresses—the Church of England, the Baptist, and the Congregational. The Pope's Encyclical could not be passed over, and each of the three Presidents—the Bishop of Norwich, Mr. Greenhough, of Leicester, and Mr. David Thomas, of Bristol—gave us his view of the subject. In each of the deliveries we find something to agree with. Mr. Thomas's declaration that Catholicity must come before reunion, and that there may be a true Catholicity without any formal, outward, and visible union of churches; Mr. Greenhough's justification of the "free spirit" resulting in diverse communions, which may exist with a real brotherhood of hearts, may be especially commended. The latter gentleman's answer to the Pope, blunt though it be, expresses more truly the heart of England on the subject than the mellifluous periods of the Bishop, or the unctuous, not to say, nauseous language of that other Pope, Dr. Parker. "To tell us," says Mr. Greenhough, "that the Church is only found in conjunction with a certain rigid and unexpressive form of ecclesiastical discipline and policy, that there is no Church without a graduated hierarchy, a stereotyped creed, a certain confined channel of grace, and a real or fictitious line of apostolical succession, is to tell us that there can be no living body and throbbing heart without a particular fashion of dress, or that there can be no divine force without one unvarying kind of machinery." No words could better rebuke the pretensions of Rome when addressing Orthodox Dissent, and no words could better rebuke in turn Orthodox Dissent when addressing Unitarians.

Another subject of absorbing interest at each of the Congresses was that of Elementary Education. The impudent demand of Roman Catholic and Church of England schools for increased grants from the State while their schools remain under private management has aroused the old Nonconformist spirit, and we are glad to see that the Baptist and Congregational assemblies spoke with no uncertain sound. The mischief of the Cardinals and Archbishops proposals lies in the fact that they would effectually check the gradual extension of the School Board system, and perpetuate a denominational for a national system of elementary schools in all country districts. It is time our own friends were up and doing. Anything more vital to our principles, positions and interests cannot be imagined. Our watchword should be simple, "No more public money without full and adequate public control."

Much is made by the Archbishop, Mr. Athelstan, Riley, and others, about the aggrieved parent—aggrieved forsooth, because he cannot get his own peculiar dogmas taught to his children in Board Schools. There was once a famous essay on "Snakes in Iceland," which began with the confession that snakes cannot be found in Iceland. The aggrieved parent does not exist! No one has yet been able to produce him. He is a clerical bogey. The truth is ninety per cent. of the parents don't care a ha'porth of shavings about the matter one way or the other. We wish they did.

On Prayer.

To Thee, I lift my thoughts on high,
Thou maker of the earth and sky!
Thy wonder-working hand is seen
In every flower and spear of green.

In hours of stillness and of rest,
Our souls approach thy throne the best;
O, give us Thy eternal love,
To guide us to the realms above.

We often pray for foolish things,
Scarce knowing whence our folly springs:
But Thou art wiser, and dost know,
The proper way that we should go.

Then let us trust our heavenly King,
And to His throne our offerings bring,
His cry is "love," not hollow creeds,
'Tis pity, mercy, noble deeds!

It puts us in a peaceful frame,
This act of prayer—which praise nor blame,
Nor man's ingratitude can steal,
A joy the wicked cannot feel.

The prayerful soul may take delight
In dwelling on the heavenly light,
In soaring to the realms above,
The source of light, of life, of love.

W. A. BOULTON.

Manchester College (Oxford) Letter.

The following rhapsody has been supplied me on "Oxford in Autumn." It forms, I think, a fitting commencement for this letter :—

Oxford is a wonderful city. Its treasures of loveliness are inexhaustible. The sweet glamour of olden days is about its colleges and halls, and nature has done her best to harmonise with this antique spirit. At this time of the year we are especially impressed by the tacit sympathy which seems to exist between the dear old buildings, and the grassy lawns, the magnificent trees, the gently clinging creepers with which they are associated. What a wealth of colour is everywhere to be seen! The dead leaves rustle about us on all sides, yet ere they fall they gleam in amber and brown and gold, telling out immortal glories with their latest breath. There is an incense of beauty in the skies, and adoration awakes as naturally beneath its power as the flower awakens to greet the sun. We are indeed blessed, who can pass to each day's round of work with hearts and souls inspired by sweet communion with such beauties.

And now to descend to prose. We welcome among us this session ten "freshers," who will, we hope, in some measure compensate for the "old familiar faces" that are gone. Three hail from the States—Messrs. Duncan, Pope, and How—one from Hungary—Mr. Löfi—Mr. Józan's successor. The remaining six the British Islands claim. Messrs. Shaw (Exeter), Thomas, and Gorton have entered as theological students. Messrs. Andreae (Lincoln), Ryland (Lincoln), and Jenkins (Jesus) as "externals." Of those who left us at the close of last session Mr. Austin is at Leipzig (in Auerbach's Keller may be!), Mr. Perris is assistant missionary at the Domestic Mission. Liverpool, and Mr. Józan is in his "ain countree."

We equally welcome among us Mr. W. A. S. Hewins, M.A., who has been appointed Dunkin Lecturer in Sociology for the current session. We had an opportunity of making his acquaintance last term at one of Mr. Carpenter's Sunday "afternoons," when he gave us so admirable an address that we formed high expectations of him. His opening lecture was delivered on October 16th, and gave, I believe, the greatest satisfaction. I heard someone remark of him after the lecture that he was a poetic and human economist. Besides his weekly lecture he is taking us an extra hour in practical work, giving to each of us some special research. He is wise enough to regard us as in the future likely to occupy positions of importance in commercial centres, and is conducting his course with that object in view. Mr. Hewins is Principal of the School of Economics recently started in London, which received an appreciative column in the *Chronicle* some weeks back.

The Rev. R. A. Armstrong, B.A., is delivering this term a course of six lectures on "The Practical Work of the Ministry. The Rev. George St. Clair is also, we understand, giving a course of lectures during the session.

Also, on the foundation of the Hibbert Trust, three public lectures will be delivered at the College by Mr. F. C. Conybeare, M.A. (late Fellow of University College), on "The Nature and Importance of Demonological Beliefs in Early Christianity," on November 18th, November 25th, and December 2nd.

Mr. Bernard Macdonald, M.A., is engaged to give the second and third year men lessons in public reading and speaking, and Mr. J. E. Healey, M.A., lessons in voice production to the first year men.

The session was opened by the Rev. J. E. Odgers, M.A., with a lecture on "Nonconformity and the Theory of the Church." A report of the lecture appeared in the *Enquirer* of October 19th.

We are delighted to hear that the Rev. Stopford Brooke has accepted an appointment as Preacher to the College, and that he is entering on his duties at Christmas. Mr. Brooke's associations with the Church and his fame as a preacher and man of letters should certainly draw to our chapel many 'Varsity men who have hitherto kept away. The "susceptible youths" of the College—so the *Inquirer* styles us—hope much from him.

There is a scheme on foot to make the College residential by taking over certain property in Holywell adjacent to the college. If this is decided upon we shall go into residence next session.

The new window recently added to the chancel end of our beautiful College chapel is a very fine piece of work, and makes us long to see the other windows in their places.

There are ten figures in the design, which are almost life size, and are arranged in two series of five each. The upper series consist of Joseph, Mary the mother, Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and Peter—in that order; below follow successively Matthew, Mark, Paul, Luke, and John—the evangelists, with their several symbols, the human face, the lion, the ox, and the eagle. Paul is represented in the act of reproving the citizens of Athens, and near him stands a pillar bearing the inscription "ignoto deo." The subjects in the upper row are more simple in composition. Jesus is the centre figure—represenred as a youthful shepherd bearing on his shoulders a lamb. It is perhaps in accordance with the spirit of the Master that no special prominence is given to him. Above this double row of New Testament characters, in the centre of the arch forming the top of the window, is a medallion of the Nativity, encircled by a ring of cherub faces. The colouring of this section gives it, unfortunately as we think, a sort of ruder kaleidoscopic effect. The treatment of the same subject by Sir Joshua Reynolds in New College Chapel offers a very remarkable contrast both in its conception and in its tones.

The background of the figures in the main window is of a pale green tint, and since they are coloured in rich strong tones of blue, red, and brown, a very striking effect of relief is produced.

Across the foot of the window run the following words: "This window was given by Frederick Nettlefold and Mary Catherine his wife in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four."

We feel assured that the blessings of generations of worshippers will consecrate this beautiful and appropriate gift.

The Oxford Fabians are having Mr. Sidney Webb and Miss Enid Stacey to lecture to them this term. Mr. William Morris is also coming down for some local Socialist body. Mr. John Trevor, I believe, is also paying a visit.

Most of us have been at the Lakes during the vacation, the happy guests of Professor and Mrs. Carpenter. It

was a memorable time we spent there, a time of magnificent mountain climbs, of glorious drives, of friendly association with each other in scenes and occupations so different from those that prevail on the banks of the Isis. Of these days with the memories of Scawfell, Skiddaw, Ullswater, Grasmere, and the rest, we shall never think without delight, and never, too, without the deepest feeling of gratitude to our kind host and hostess for their generous entertainment of us.

Two Russian Fables.

FROM KRILOFF.

PARNASSUS.

"When the gods had been chased away from Greece, and their realms were being divided among mortals, a certain man obtained Parnassus as his share, and made use of it as a pasturage for asses. Well, the asses found out somehow or other that the Muses used to live there, and they proceeded to make the following observations:—'It wasn't for nothing that we were turned loose on Parnassus. No doubt the fact is the world is tired of the Muses, and it wants us to sing to it here.' 'Look out now!' cries one of them, 'no nervousness! I will lead off, and mind you don't lag behindhand. Timidity becomes us not, my friends. Surely we shall render our race illustrious, forming our own choir, and lifting up our voices in louder music than the nine sisters ever produced. And in order that no injury may be done to our confraternity, we will establish among ourselves the following regulation:—That no individual shall be admitted on Parnassus, whose voice is deficient in the true asinine charm.' This delightful piece of eloquence was fully appreciated by the asses, and the new band of choristers burst into just such music as is heard when a long string of waggons creaks painfully past on unoiled wheels. But what was the result of this singing, so full of varied charms? Why the landlord ended by losing all patience, so he drove the asses off Parnassus and into the stable."

THE CORN-FLOWER.

"A corn-flower which grew in a retired corner, suddenly became feeble, and almost withered away. With drooping head it sadly awaited its approaching end, whispering to the breeze, meanwhile, in mournful tones, 'Ah me! if the day would but break, and the radiant sun would but light up the scene, it might be that even I might revive.' 'How simple you must be, my friend!' observed a Beetle which happened to be digging close at hand. 'Do you suppose the sun has nothing else to do but to see how you are getting on, and whether you are blooming or fading? You may be quite sure that it has neither leisure nor inclination for that. If you had flown about like me, and learnt to know the world, you would have been aware that it is entirely to the sun that the meadows and the corn-fields owe their life and their happiness. Its heat lends warmth to the tall oaks and cedars, and from its influence the fragrant flowers derive their wondrous beauty. But those flowers are quite different from you. They are so rich and rare that Time itself grieves as he mows them down. But you are neither beautiful nor fragrant, so don't annoy the sun by your importunity. You may be quite sure it won't waste a ray upon you, so give up striving for what that is impossible, and just fade away quietly!' But the sun rose and illumined the face of nature, spreading its rays widely abroad over the whole kingdom of Flora, and the poor corn-flower, which had begun to wither during the hours of darkness, was fully revived by its celestial light.

An old lady, long famed for sour looks and cross words, was observed to have suddenly become very amiable. "What happy change has come over you?" said a neighbour. "Why," replied the transformed, "to tell you the truth, I have been all my life striving for a contented mind, and I have finally made up mind to sit down contented without one."

We are apt to look with disesteem on the manifestation of feeling in religion because, as we have seen it in ignorant and fanatical people, it has led to things that are offensive to good taste. But, after all, some kind of feeling must underlie every moment of life. Emotion in some shape or other is co-extensive with intelligent being. Life is made up of thought and feeling, and the more thought and feeling you have the richer you are. No great cause ever won its way unless backed up by great feeling.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

Trotty.

I.

Who would be a mother?
Not a moment's peace!
Cares succeed each other
Troubles never cease.
You may call them fancies—
You, papa! may laugh—
Take my place, or Nancy's,
For a day—or half!
You know nought of sitting
Mending little frocks,
You know nought of knitting
Heaps of pairs of socks.
You taste all the pleasures,
You're the source of joys,
You bring all the treasures,
Sugar-plums and toys:
You don't do the scolding,
You don't bear the frets;
You are spared beholding
Pranks, and pouts, and pets.
You don't give the powder,
You don't hear the cry
As it waxes louder,
And the face grows wry.
Dressed at morning neatly,
Trotty's carried down
Just to kiss you sweetly
Ere you start for town.
Next, all smile and dimple,
Sash and spotless skirt,
Trotty, sly and simple,
Enters with dessert.
Brisk as her canary,
Perches on your knee;
Roguish-looking fairy!
Who so proud as she?
Cheeks like ripened peaches,
Shoulders plump and fair,
Mouth that lisp soft speeches,
Rings of hazel hair.
Eyes like sapphires gleaming,
Wistfully and merry;
Sideway glances, scheming
For a cake or cherry.
"Good as gold!" No wonder!
Humoured, coaxed, and fed;
Pocket full of plunder,
Trotty trots to bed.
Nought to check or foil her,
Best of tiny queens!
Ah, papa! you spoil her—
Look behind the scenes!

* * * *

Morning—I am dressing;
Dark November day;
Hark! a scream distressing
Sounds across the way.
Down go locks I'm brushing—
Brushes on the floor—
Out, half-clad, I'm rushing
To the nursery door.
"Nancy, what's the matter?"
"Nothing, mum!" I'm told;
"Miss is cross, look at her!
'Cause the water's cold."
Day outside looks rawly,
Fog is thick as glue,
Weather looking squally—
Trotty squally too!
Back I trudge, my fingers
Nipping with the frost;
Long my toilet lingers—
Everything is lost!

Breakfast safely over,
You put on your boots—
Leaving me "in clover
To my home pursuits!"
"Clover!" How man settles
Our affairs, forsooth!
Had he talked of *nettles*,
'Twould be nearer truth!
Down I sit to patching—
Nurse upstairs at work—
Trotty mischief hatching,
Squatting like a Turk!
Play things round her scattered—
Things that squeak and bark!
Creatures maimed and battered
Out of "Noah's Ark."
Battledores she drums on,
With a face like Puck's;
Noisy things she thrums on,
Painted ones she sucks!
Asking questions puzzling,
Twenty in a breath;
Now the kitten nuzzling,
Hugging it to death!
Leave my chair a minute
Just when someone knocks—
Trotty clambers in it,
Rummaging my box.
Back I hurry grumbling,
Risking sprains and falls,
Into waggons tumbling,
Slipping over balls.
What is Trotty doing?
Quiet far too long!
Mischief must be brewing—
Something going wrong.
All my work is stopping—
Lost my scissors big—
Trotty has them, cropping
Dolly's flaxen wig!
Door left open slightly—
Gracious! what a row!
Trotty's slipped out lightly—
What's the matter now?
Up I start—"Where's Trotty?"
Sprawling on the mat!
Swollen eyes, brow knotty,
Dolly mangled flat!
What does it betoken?
Trotty tripped her toes;
Trotty's heart is broken!
So is Dolly's nose!
"Naughty girl for straying!"
"Bless us! what a shriek!
Can't hear what I'm saying—
Dear! she's cut her cheek!
Here's a fresh disaster!
Here are mother's cares!
Nancy! fetch some plaster—
Take the child upstairs!"

* * * *

Ah, papa! you'll rue it!
Trotty's growing wild—
And you know you do it!
Yes! you spoil that child.

II.

Summer-time is coming,
Every flowery bell
Wooes the bee-hive humming:—
Trotty isn't well.
Cowslips gold come trooping,
Daisies white and red;
But my daisy's drooping:—
Trotty hangs her head.
Rosy buds upspringing!
Peep from leaf and stalk,
Merry birds are singing:—
Trotty doesn't talk.
Sunshine glitters brightly,
Garden walks look gay,
Butterflies float whitely:—
Trotty doesn't play.
All her toys forsaken,
"Come, my pet! to me;
Trotty shall be taken
Up on mammy's knee."
Never mind the knitting,
Heels, or toes, or soles;
Let the rents go splitting,
Never mind the holes!
Hands at work once nimble
Now the pulse must feel;
Puss has got the thimble,
Kitten has the reel.
Needles, pins, go missing—
No one heeds them now;
Mammy's busy kissing

Trotty's heated brow.
Mammy's busy pressing
Trotty's little hands,
Coining words caressing
Trotty understands.
Little brown curls lying
Pressed to mammy's breast;
Little bosom sighing,
Little feet at rest.
Eyelids falling heavy,
Blue eyes in eclipse;
Wan smiles, hard to levy,
On the little lips.
Nothing now of fretting;
Only mute appeal,
Trust in mammy's petting,
Mammy's power to heal!
Tiny form resistless,
Round cheeks void of bloom,
Little fingers listless,
Silence in the room.
Birds without chirp shrilly,
All within is dull;
Trotty sits so stilly—
What a dreary lull!
"Look at pussy's tricking!"
Trotty doesn't care:
How that clock is ticking,
Underneath the stair!
Wish 'twas in the cellar!
Like a gong it strikes.
"Cook for orders"—tell her
Order what she likes!
All the house feels lonely,
Echoes all seem dead;
Did they answer only
Trotty's voice and tread?
Sunshine don't look cheering,
Summer don't rejoice;
How we miss the hearing
One familiar voice!
How we miss the seeing
One small baby face!
Such a tiny being
Filling so much space!
What says Trotty, bless her?
Put her in her cot;
Mammy will undress her,
Mammy's darling Trot!
Pack off callers, Nelly!
In the afternoon;
Nancy! bring some jelly,
Powders, and a spoon.
Don't admit one rover,
Not a fib you'll tell—
I'm "engaged all over!"
Trotty isn't well.

* * * *

Trotty's sweetly sleeping,
So I've slipped away,
After vigil keeping
All night long and day.
Couldn't bear to leave her—
Now, papa! don't smile;
'Twas so much like fever,
Don't you say 'twas bile!
You may take it coolly,
You slept bravely through;
You were snoring, truly,
Loud enough for two!
I can soothe and chasten,
You can make her glad;
But to me she'll hasten,
When she's sick or sad.
Men are like each other,
Slow to feel or act;
You are not a mother,
That's a patent fact!
You don't care a tittle
Till the danger comes;
O! you're good for little
But for sugar-plums!
Pooh! a fig for pity
That can snore like yours.
Buy her something pretty;
Toys work wondrous cures!
You've "engagements pressing—
Can't buy toys to-day."
Do you mind confessing
What engagements pray?
"Dinner, and a meeting"—
That's how you're beguiled;
Gossipping and eating,
And forget your child!
Hang "Associations!"
"British" fiddlestick!
Old wives' dissertations!
Tell them Trotty's sick.
Is it "mother's folly?"
Men are selfish churls?
Bring her home a dolly,
One with hazel curls.
Hush! the darling chatters.
"Spoil her?" Never fear!
Folly spoils and flatters—
Love spoils no one, dear!

HARRIET E. HUNTER.

News from the Field.

MIDLAND CHRISTIAN UNION.—*Welcome Meeting to Rev John Harrison, the newly-appointed Missionary Agent.*—On Monday evening, October 7th, a public meeting was held in the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham, to welcome the Rev. John Harrison to his work as the missionary agent of the Midland Christian Union. It was very well attended, but, better than that, it was permeated with such a spirit of earnestness and enthusiasm as not only augured well for the support which Mr. Harrison will receive, but revealed the deep consciousness of the need and duty of far wider missionary enterprise. The sense at once of the adequacy of our gospel to the wants of men and women, and of the crying call for its more decided emphasis against the mischievous misrepresentations to which it is subject, and still more the recrudescence of sacerdotal superstition, together with the grave responsibilities and obligations which thus lie upon all who hold it, gave the tone to every speech that was made, and they found a quickly answering chord among the audience. When the Rev. Joseph Wood showed the gross ignorance of what Unitarianism is which exists, and the delusion under which we suffer as to the supposed liberalisation of orthodox thought; when the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson spoke of the growing opposition we meet as a sign of a strong feeling that there is something to be fought, and our great work as the tearing away of the veil which has for so long hidden the face of the Master, and the rediscovery of Jesus in the full beauty of his human greatness; when, above all, Professor Carpenter, in his magnificent address, intense with the passion of his own profound conviction, thrilling with unmeasured belief in the destiny of our faith, of whose richness we have as yet only reached an imperfect consciousness, brought vividly home to us its ideal relation to the doubts, and sorrows, and sins of men, and bade us make it actual; when he impressed upon us that ours is a unique chance of reaching the ears of the working classes, cut off, as they are, from connection with religious organisations while at heart they are not irreligious, and that to that end we must accept to some extent the great ideas which are moving them, sympathise with the emotions which are surging in their hearts, and understand the conditions of life out of which these ideas and emotions have sprung; when these things were uttered in words of moving eloquence, we felt with the speakers that necessity

is laid upon us—woe be to us if we preach not the Gospel. That as much has not been done as might have been, that to some degree we have been faithless to our trust, seemed apparent when Professor Carpenter discussed seriously the question raised by Dr. Welldon at Norwich, "How can we unite with Unitarians, smitten as they are with paralysis in missionary enterprise?" Among the causes of that paralysis he named our unwillingness to interfere with the religious convictions of others, an attitude not by any means without its good side, and our own want of faith showing itself in one direction in disinclination to take trouble in order to spread it; and in another in our uncertainty about the validity of the truths we profess to hold. This tone gave to the special object of the meeting an added significance. The welcome to Mr. Harrison was the more sympathetic and hearty; and the audience seemed to realise vividly the point made first by the Chairman, the Rev. L. P. Jacks, and afterwards insisted on by the Rev. Joseph Wood that that Church alone is healthy and strong which engages in and liberally supports missionary enterprise. As President of the Midland Christian Union the Rev. Joseph Wood moved, and the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson, as representing the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, which contributes largely to the support of the Missionary, seconded, and Priestley Smith, Esq., the Chairman of the Church of the Messiah Vestry Committee, supported the resolution of welcome:—"That this meeting heartily approves of the new departure of the Midland Christian Union in the appointment of a missionary agent, and offers to the Rev. John Harrison its best wishes for the success of the work to which he has devoted himself." Mr. Wood explained the duties of a missionary agent. In a word, these are the oversight of all the aided churches in his district, the helping of weak causes and the opening up of new ground. In particular Mr. Harrison has for the present the superintendence of the congregations at Wolverhampton and Small Heath, which are both without ministers, and the local circumstances of which are likely to prove the temporary office of Mr. Harrison to them of peculiar value. He detailed the anxious thought which the Committee of the Union had given to the matter, and their unanimous agreement that Mr. Harrison was the very man needed, and in the name of the meeting wished him God speed.—The Rev. John Harrison, in a reply full of quiet confidence in the success of the work he has undertaken, declared that there should be lacking on his part neither expenditure of time nor devotion of strength. He did not speak without appreciation of the difficulties of his task. He knew them to be great. But he had had some experience in the building up of the West Bromwich congregation, with which duty the Committee of the Midland Christian Union had entrusted him over twenty-one years ago. The service of that congregation he had only just left to take up the new work. Already at Wolverhampton and Small Heath he could report signs of revival and new interest. What was especially required at Small Heath he declared to be a building of their own. Given that, he had faith in a more rapid progress.—A very cordial vote of thanks to Professor Carpenter and the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson was moved by the Rev. James C. Street, and seconded by the Rev. A. A. Charlesworth.

BIRMINGHAM.—*Church of the Messiah.*—The annual meeting of the Church of the Messiah Sunday Schools and Home Mission was held in the school-room on Monday, October 14th, Mr. H. Payton presiding. Miss Rosa Kenrick read the report of the girls' school, which states that the general standard for excellence had been maintained during the past year. The number of scholars on the books was 192, and the average attendance 80 per cent. in the morning and 90 per cent. in the afternoon. The number of teachers was 18. The young women's adult class had 38 members, and was making steady progress. Connected with the school are an evening sewing club, a poor girls' holiday fund, and a relief fund for providing dispensary notes, &c. Mr. A. Kenrick read the report of the boys' school, in which the number on the books is 169, with an average attendance of 83 per cent. in the morning and 87 per cent. in the afternoon. In connection with both departments of the school window gardening competitions, a savings bank, and a library had been successfully conducted. The report of the missionary (Mr. Tranter) was read by the Rev. L. P. Jacks. It gave an interesting account of his year's work amongst the poor and sick, and especially of his experience during the terrible weather in January. During that period the missionary collected and expended over £80 special donations, besides distributing a large quantity of clothing and other comforts. From the ordinary relief fund £34 4s. had been expended. The treasurer's statement, read by Mr. T. W. Ryland, showed that the receipts from the schools and mission, including annual collection £50 1s., and subscriptions £161 4s., amounted to £215 19s., and the expenditure to £208 10s. 5d., the balance in hand at the end of the year being £10 18s. 2d. The reports were adopted, on the motion of the Chairman, seconded by Dr. J. Russell. Mr. H. K. Beale was elected superintendent of the boys' school, and Miss Rosa Kenrick was re-elected superintendent of the girls' school. The other officers were re-elected, with thanks for their services, and, on the motion of Mr. Priestley Smith, seconded by Mr. H. K. Beale, a vote of thanks was passed to the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, the preacher of the anniversary sermons on Sunday, special reference being made to his share in the successful biography of the late Dr. Crosskey. Mr. Armstrong replied to the vote of thanks. The proceedings were agreeably relieved by glees sung by the Sunday school choir.

BIRMINGHAM.—The Church of the Messiah Mission, Lower Fazeley Street, is a busy centre of work all the year round, both Sundays and weekdays. Special services illustrating the lessons of the Seasons have been held. As these have never been reported it may be interesting just to refer to these. The Floral Service was held on July 21st. It was arranged by the Rev. T. Pipe, and consisted of solos, duets, choruses, responsive readings, and appropriate dialogue. It was rendered largely by the children, who had thoroughly learned the lessons of the flowers. The service was repeated on the following Sunday. On Sunday, August 25th was held the Fruit Service. In this event the young people are also much interested. On a large table at the top of the chapel were spread the various fruits of the garden

and orchard. Special hymns were sung and adressesd given by the Minister. On Sunday, Oct. 20, we held our Harvest Thanksgiving. The chapel was decorated with corn, vegetables and bread. The choir rendered a Cantata, entitled "The Angel of the Harvest," the Minister inserting appropriate addresses. It may be said of all these services that not only has the chapel been crowded, but numbers have been unable to gain admission.

BIRMINGHAM.—*Church of the Saviour.*—It will be sad news for many that the days of this once great church are numbered. Built for George Dawson, and associated with his name, it had for many years a distinguished career, and was from several points of view the most notable place of worship in Birmingham. George Dawson stamped himself indelibly on the life of the town as a whole, and more especially gave a religious lift, impulse, and direction to many young men who afterwards did yeoman service for civic religion. The Church of the Saviour did not, however, contain within itself the promise and potency of long life. It clustered around one great spirit of marked originality and distinct personality. It had no ecclesiastical trammels; but then it had no ecclesiastical associations to strengthen it in the day of trial. Even before George Dawson's death a change had made itself manifest, and the congregation had begun to decline. With his removal from the scene many families who lived in distant suburbs joined other and nearer churches, and the gradual change in the neighbourhood from a residential to a business quarter of the town operated to make success more and more difficult. Gallant and devoted attempts were made, first by Mr. St. Clair and then by Mr. Street, to recover the cause, but it is doubtful whether an angel from heaven could have succeeded. Every sympathy will be felt for Mr. Street, who was giving himself to the work with a zeal, earnestness, and ability which few could emulate and none exceed. If any man could have done the work that man was Mr. Street. That the task proved impossible for him is the most convincing testimony to its enormous difficulties. We trust our friend may find happy and successful work in a more promising sphere. We understand the church closes at Christmas.

BIRMINGHAM (*Small Heath*).—The harvest thanksgiving service was held in the Somerville Road Board School on Sunday evening, October 6th, when an appropriate sermon was preached by the Rev. John Harrison. The room was tastefully decorated, special anthems and hymns were sung, and the congregation was the largest since the resignation of the late minister.—The inaugural tea meeting of the Literary and Social Union was held on Thursday, October 10th, when the president, Councillor A. R. Jephcott, took the chair, and a pleasant evening was spent with singing, music, recitations, and short addresses.

BANBURY (*Christchurch Chapel*).—Special services in thanksgiving for the harvest were held on Sunday, September 22nd. The interior of the building was very tastefully decorated for the occasion. The communion table was loaded with stands of choice fruit, vases of flowers, large and handsome loaves of bread (sent by Mr. Shepherd and Mr. Cleaver), corn, &c, most tastefully arranged. The decorations reflected the greatest credit upon those undertaking the work, prominent among whom may be mentioned the Rev. H. and Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Lines, Mrs. Miles, Miss Bonham, and Miss Crowe. The Pastor (Rev. H. Hill) conducted the services, and preached sermons appropriate to the occasion—in the afternoon from 2 Cor. iii. 18. "From glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord," and in the evening from John vi. 12. "He said unto his disciples, gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." There was a moderate attendance in the afternoon, and a very good congregation in the evening. There were special services of prayer and praise by the choir (Mr. F. T. C. Webb, organist), and Mr. Meadows assisted the choir on both occasions. Collections were made on behalf of the chapel funds.

LYE.—On Monday, November 4th, a bazaar will be held to clear off the debt on the new buildings. The bazaar will be opened at three o'clock by the Rev. Joseph Wood. On Sunday, October 13th, Harvest Festival services were held, and well attended. The musical selections were admirably rendered, and the collections were slightly better than last year.

WEST BROMWICH.—On Monday evening, October 14th, the congregation presented an address, with a purse of money, to the Rev. J. Harrison, on his leaving West Bromwich to become the missionary superintendent for the Midland Christian Union. There was a large attendance. The Rev. J. Lummis, B.A., Mr. Harrison's successor, presided, and addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. C. Street, H. McKean, and by Alderman Blades, Messrs. Underhill, Watts, Greenway, &c. Mr. Harrison suitably responded.

WHITCHURCH (SALOP).—We hear with much pleasure from the Rev. G. Eyre Evans that on Wednesday week a new cemetery was formally opened by the Rector, in concert with all the Nonconformist ministers, a simple dedication service being used, at which representatives from all the congregations in the town were present. There is to be no mortuary chapel, and thus the unseemly spectacle of two rival chapels in the graveyard has been avoided. There is a convenient lodge, with waiting rooms and a fine lych gate; but it is arranged that the burial services shall be chiefly held at the respective churches of the families bereaved, and a simple interment take place in the cemetery. It is refreshing to record so happy an instance of brotherly accord; and we may well believe that the existence of our Free Christian Church in the town has not been without a great share of influence towards the catholic feeling that prevails.

The correctest theories without emotion will fail to do any good, when a very imperfect theory backed up by warm feeling will do wonders. Feeling catches on and is contagious.